

Georgette Perry

THE CAT'S DEATH

That night you called repeatedly,

A forlorn cry, as if I could never reach you.

You were alone already.

The pupils of your eyes grown wide and black

Stared past the border of the dark land.

At daybreak you died in my arms.

I carried you to the rainy mountain,

To a mossy tree whose roots cleft rock.

The mist that silvered my hair and your rich fur

Had been in store for us, Terra.

The leafy earth of the winter mountain

Had patiently waited our coming.

Then there were dreams.

Something of you came back to me from the mountain,

A bobcat, heavy with wild kittens —

No one else could touch you but you came to my hand.

In bewilderment I stroked the same brindled fur.

In the grey dawn I knew you.

SAFETY

Thunder shivers the earth

To the deep hiding place

Where I crouch furred and wakeful

Tightening claws in damp clay.

Within a fear so huge the mountain is shaking

I don't need to be afraid.